

JOURNAL OF THE
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

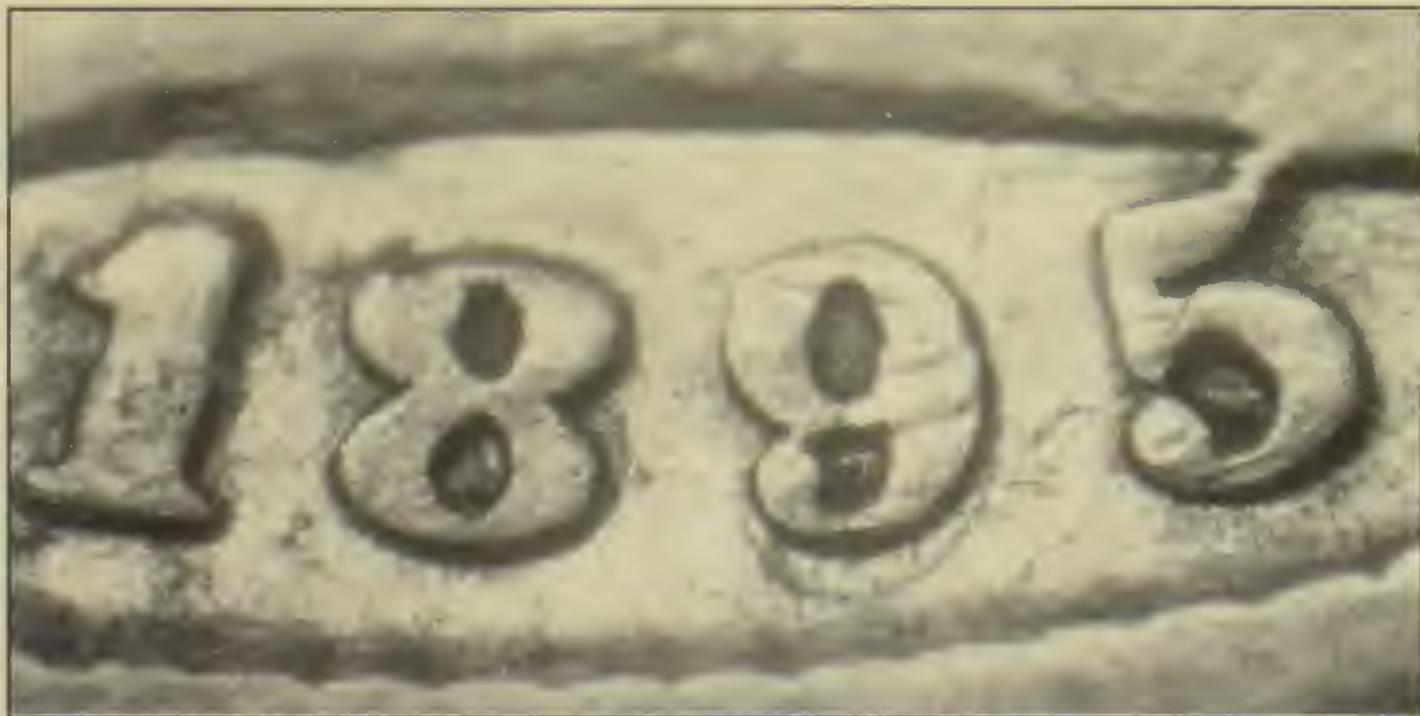
Volume 14

Number 1



2003

1895-S Dime RPD



New Variety?

See page 7

Cover photo courtesy of Lindsay Ashburn



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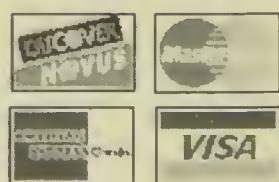
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JOURNAL OF THE
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

Founded in 1989 by Steve Epstein

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The publishing schedule for the Journal places our first year 2003 issue in your hands well after New Year's Day. I have the pleasure of two welcomes each year; this is my welcome to the first issue of the year and my intent that you will find BCCS to be a source of knowledge and enjoy the camaraderie flowing from fellow Barber collectors.

As I reference the first issue of our Journal arriving in May, our valued Editor, Eileen Ribar and I have discussed the hope of moving up the time when this first issue arrives. Note this is no small nor individual task as Eileen needs sufficient copy to produce an issue. Nonetheless, she has committed to gaining on the clock!

The fellowship of Barber collectors is most widely shared through the Journal and reading the thoughts and research of individuals sharing the collecting urge for this series. However, this mechanism may not be enough! Since my last message I've confirmed with ANA Convention Director Barbara Bishop for the BCCS meeting at the ANA summer convention in Baltimore. This will be held on August 2 at 9:30 AM in the Baltimore Convention Center. Baltimore is a rather accessible place with great sights at The Inner Harbor for non-numismatists (one is a fantastic aquarium!). Consider this year as the time to attend your first ANA Convention (and yes, non ANA members are welcome).

Other means of interacting with Barber enthusiasts have been discussed within the Society, primarily that of creating an E-mail discussion group. In discussion with Paul and Eileen, I don't see bringing this into being. First, I didn't receive any comment when I last mentioned this topic. Second, most individuals with active E-mail accounts are not anxious to provide their account ID to everyone (this would be the lowest level of creating any BCCS/Barber 'chat list' as I envision this). One means of avoiding an open list, is having a moderator; an individual in a trusted capacity who would funnel messages, moderate discussions and post information. No one has come forward and accepted this complex assignment. Therefore, the Society will not implement this proposal at this point.

Prior to writing this message, I spoke to Eileen and she informed me a great and wonderful article had arrived which she planned to publish in this issue. I speak of Michael Flanagan's paper on the 1892-micro O Barber half dollar. I look forward to reading Michael's work. Dave Lawrence always remarked about the lack of varieties in the Barber series (something he reversed with his research efforts). The "micro O" has been around for decades and represents a potential over-

continued on page 5



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Congratulations to last year's Literary Contest winners! You will find the ballot results below. It was a close contest - first and second place were just a few votes apart. Our 2003 contest opens with this issue. As the Journal begins its 14th year in print, I encourage all of you to consider contributing material to the Journal. Length is unimportant. Something of interest for "Barber Bits" or a "Letter to the Editor" would be greatly appreciated.

2002 BCCS Literary Contest Results

1st Place - \$50 - "Counterfeit 1901-S Quarters" by John Frost

2nd Place - \$25 - "The Tale of Two 1913 Mint State Barber Quarters" by Glenn Church

3rd Place tie - 1 year FREE BCCS membership - "A Happy Thanksgiving and More" by John Dembinski and "On the Trail of a Fake" by Mike Jurek

President's Message

continued from page 4

looked variety. I believe other members have performed research on a Barber variety or compiled interesting information on some aspect of Barber collecting. We all await seeing these efforts whether limited and specific or as expansive as Michael's.

Numismatic regards,
Phil Carrigan

THE JOURNAL NEEDS YOUR ARTICLES!

Remember your article submission(s) automatically enters you in the BCCS Literary Contest. The article receiving the most member votes will win a 1st place prize of \$50. Second place prize will be \$25 and third place will be a free one year BCCS membership. So, make sure your membership is up to date and get your article to Eileen at the post office or e-mail address on page 3.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS July 1st

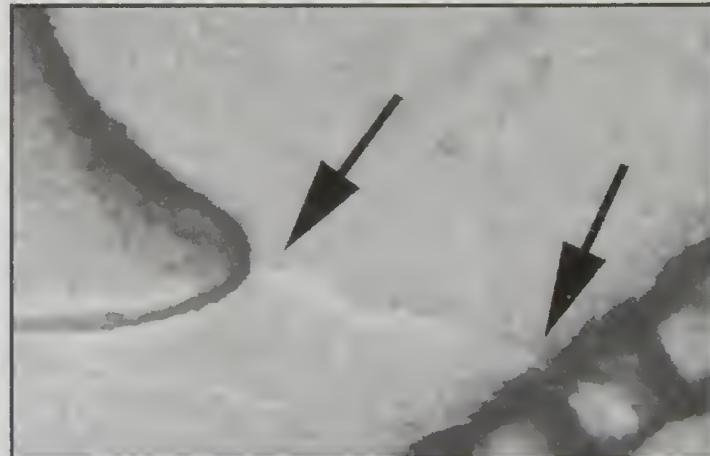
BARBER BITS

BCCS member Michael Flanagan responds to Kevin Flynn's description and photos of an 1893-O 50c MPD (Vol. 13, No. 4 Journal, pg. 7) with the following information:

In the last issue, we learned of the existence of an 1893-O Barber Half with an imbedded "3" in the denticles. ...this coin may not have been the discovery piece. Sharp-eyed Liz Coggan at J.J. Teaparty in Boston discovered an Extra Fine 40, nice original toning, three years ago in March 2000 on one of her buying trips. She sold it to me in Teaparty's shop and I still own it. The placement of the top loop of the "3" is exactly the same as shown on the last Journal cover. It's obviously from the same die. If these 2 exist, there must be more. Members, check out your '93-Os!

Editor's note: At the Jan. 2000 FUN Show, Jim Smith submitted this 1911-D Barber Dime for attribution to John Bordner, president of the Nat'l Collectors Assn. of Die Doubling and also the official attributer for John Wexler for all RPMs, OMMs, Indian Head and type coin RPDs, ten cents and fifty cents doubled dies. It is now listed in the Wexler Files as 1911-D 10c WRPM-001.

The variety shows a nice secondary mintmark to the north of the primary mintmark. (Photos courtesy of John Bordner)



Obverse and reverse die cracks on Jim Smith's 1911-D Barber Dime are visible.

NEW DIME VARIETY?

By Lindsay Ashburn

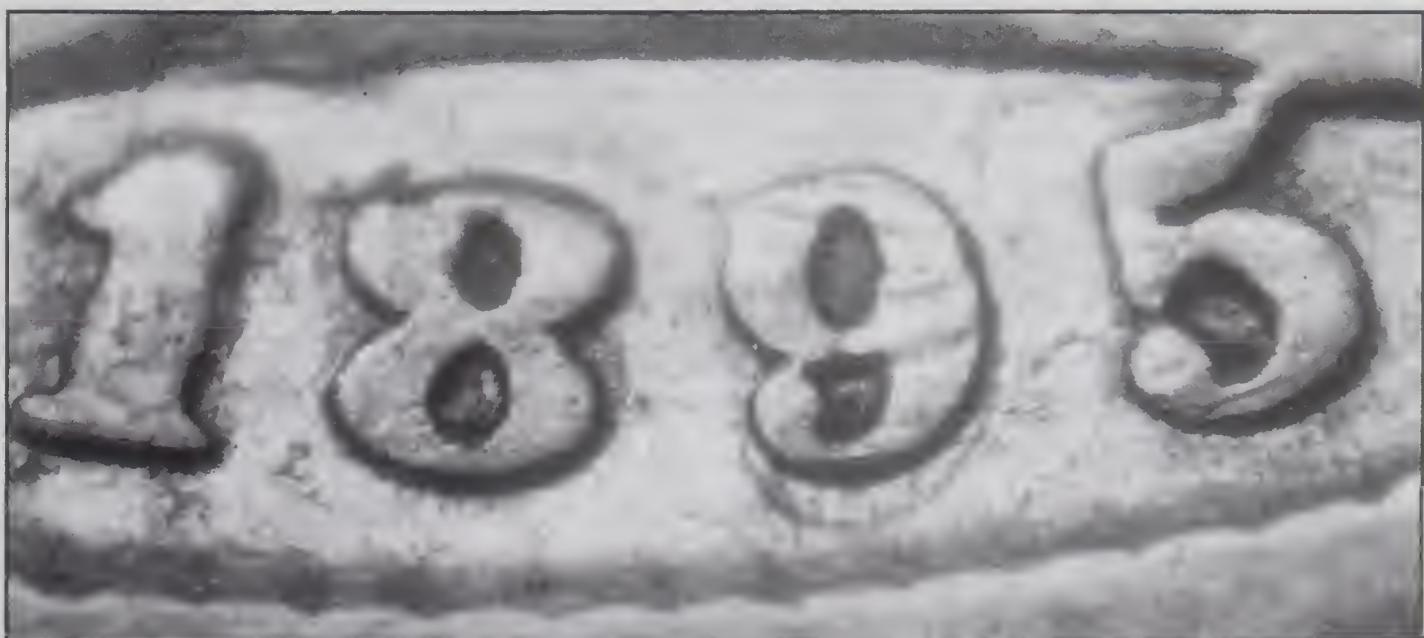
David Luftig presented me with a picture of an 1895-S dime with dramatic repunching of the 9 to the south. This variety is not mentioned in any of the standard references and I have no prior knowledge of this variety. There is one documented variety (L-101) but this new variety is very different. I will try to provide some diagnostics here to help with your search for others:

The specimen pictured grades VG-Fine. The repunching is visible only on the 9. The entire lower loop of the 9 is doubled and widely separated from the primary lower loop. The repunching appears directly South, not skewed to either side.

The entire date is closer to the bust than to the rim. The 5 is almost touching the bust. The primary 9 is almost equidistant from the bust and the rim, while the repunched portion divides the distance between the rim and the bottom of the primary 9.

The specimen provided has a die crack running diagonally upward through the base of the 9 to the middle of the 5 and from the upper right tip of the 5 to the bust, effectively connecting the 5 to the bust.

Though a higher grade specimen would be preferable for serious diagnostic study, this coin has been a pleasure to present. Thanks to David Luftig for sharing.



Illustrating Varieties

By Steve Hustad

I'm sitting here in my basement typing out this latest installment of "Illustrating Varieties," while outside it's finally sunny, and we're experiencing our first day up in the 60s since about last mid October! So how's that for dedication?

Anyway, up here where winter is a solid five months of the calendar, we just have to look at it as giving us more time with our coin collections. More time to discover those elusive Barber die varieties and endlessly analyze what it all means, and how they came about, and in what order.

My "non-collecting friends" think I'm insane for doing all of this of course, but my soul mates within the BCCS all know better, right...right?

This 7th installment of "Illustrating Varieties" continues on with the Barber quarter series - this one and part of the next dealing with various quarters of 1907. It seems to me that the years 1907 and 1908 are particularly rich with RPDs and RPMs. I'm not sure exactly what was going on at the Mint during those years, but these two years do strike a noticeable difference compared to the years prior and after.

So let's begin.

7th installment: Two 1907 Denver Mint Quarters and a 1907 New Orleans piece - all RPDs

190/907-D, RPD - North (1 plate, obverse; plate coin is VF-30)

I believe this RPD is the same as that included in Dave Lawrence's *The Complete Guide to Barber Quarters, 2nd Edition*, on page 80 & 81, labeled as "Lawrence 103."

The photograph included in Dave's book also shows the top serif of the "1" as doubled. Although my example does not show this, I think they're from the same die because the other features are identical and the numerals line up with the denticles in exactly the same way. Why doesn't the "1" doubling show up on my piece then? I don't know. Maybe Dave's plate coin is higher grade? More research is needed to see if others without the 1's doubling show up. Anyone?

No diagnostics are evident on either the obverse or reverse. Not the slightest die crack. Possibly this plate coin is from a very early die state.

1907/1907-D, RPD - South (1 plate, obverse; plate coin is AU-50)

Dave's Quarter book notes this variety as "Lawrence 102" and it is undoubtedly the same as I'm illustrating here. The denticles and numerals all line up the same, etc. All four digits have been repunched from their original South locations - most boldly on the 9, 0, and 7. Repunching is most clear at the bottom of each numeral, rather than within the loops.

As Dave mentions in his book, this die is also a double die obverse (DDO). This is evident in numerous (but never obvious) areas around the coin's perimeter. The coin plated here also has an obverse diagnostic - that being a single die crack from the tip of Liberty's bust to the thirteenth star as shown.

1907/907/7-O, RPD - South, South, South & North (1 plate, obverse; plate coin is AU-50)

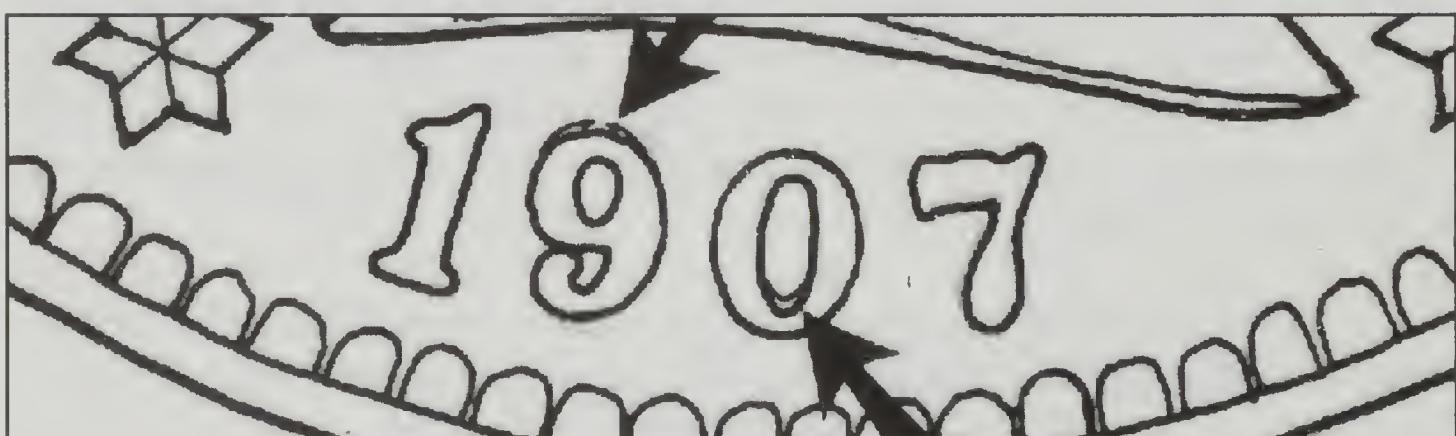
Maybe "Lawrence 101?" I don't know, but there are many similarities in his photo and my plate coin. Dave doesn't mention the triple punch on the 7 though, which is clear on my piece to the NORTH - in addition to the South repunching, and again to the South on all the other digits. Hmm, maybe a die puncher at the mint after having had WAY too much caffeine? I believe these to be from the same dies. Dave's photo even seems to show the North repunching on the 7, but it goes unmentioned in his text. So for now and until more/better evidence comes forward, I'll say they're the same.

Again, no die cracks, chips, or other diagnostics to aid the coin show cherry-picker in identifying this variety. None are seen on my coin, obverse or reverse.

This wraps up the seventh installment. It's still above 60 and sunny outside, so I think it's time to turn my mind toward refilling the bird-feeder and getting outside to enjoy this first really nice day of Spring here in the upper Midwest!

I hope you're all well and enjoying this ongoing series. I'd like to hear your comments and thoughts about any of the pieces illustrated here. Because adding to our knowledge base and understanding is pretty much what BCCS is all about. So if you wish to, I can be reached through the editor or via e-mail at: shustad@isd.net.

Thanks again, and see you next time!
Steve Hustad



OBVERSE: The 9 & 0 in the date were originally punched in too far to the north. The undertype 9 shows atop the final 9 in two parts (center having been polished away). The first 0 is visible within the 0's loop as shown. Both remnants are shallow and close - the 9 being most bold. Vestiges of the first 9 also show in the 9's lower loop - only visible with strong magnification.

REVERSE: Normal.

DIE DEFECTS:

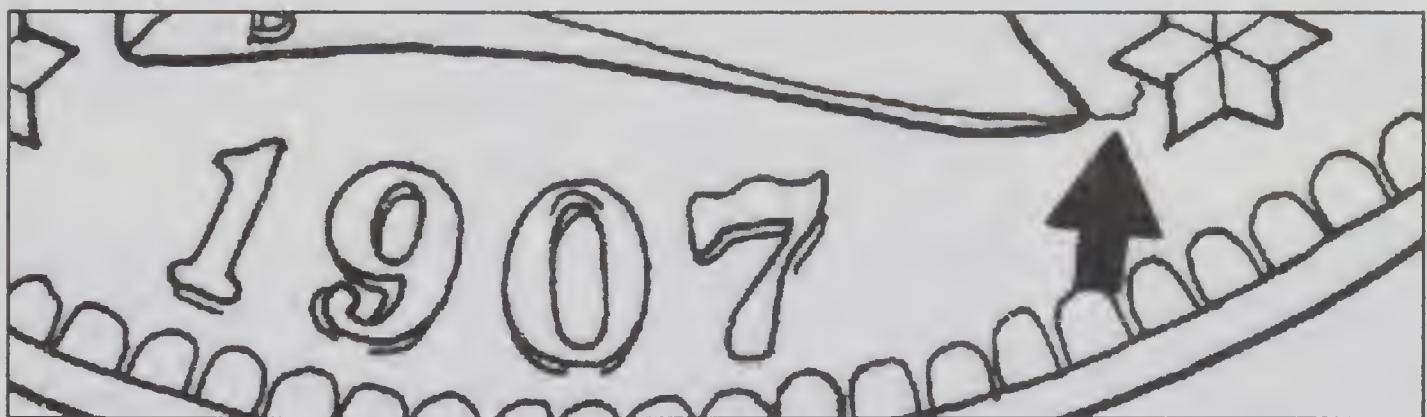
Obv.: None seen.

Rev.: None seen.

1907/1907-D

RPD - South

QUARTER



OBVERSE: All four digits have been originally punched into the die to the south of the final date. The 1 and 7 are faintly visible beneath the foot of the 1 and under the crossbar of the 7 and more lightly to the upper right of the 7. The 9 and 0 are more boldly visible at/beneath the inner and outer loop of each, but most prominent beneath each digit. (Lawrence 102)

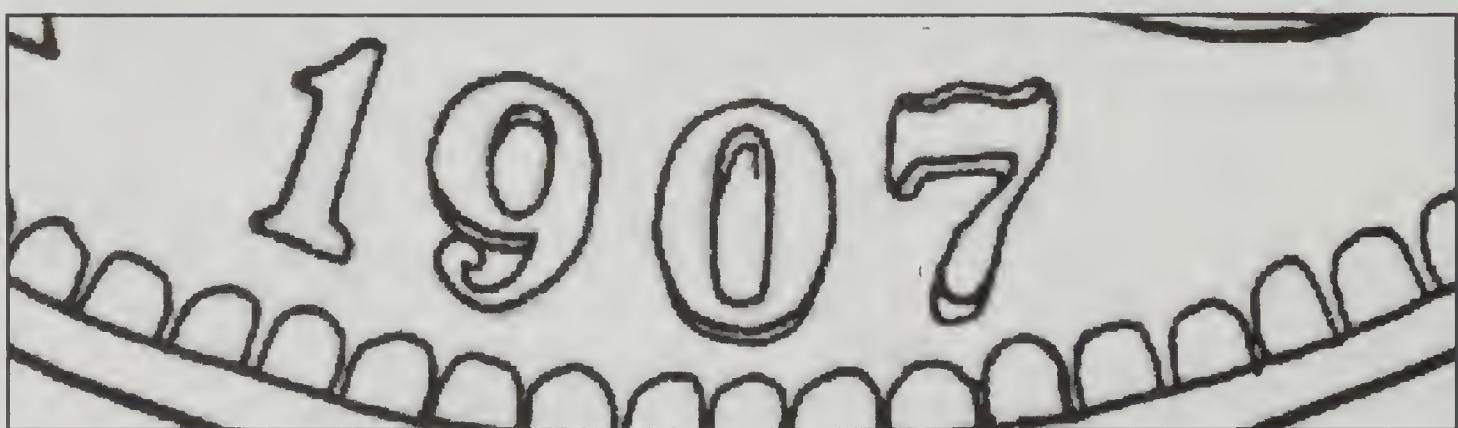
REVERSE: Normal.

DIE DEFECTS:

Obv.: One minor thin die crack from the tip of Liberty's bust almost to/touching the thirteenth star.

Rev.: None seen.

1907/907/7-O RPD - South, S, S & North QUARTER



OBVERSE: The 9, 0 and 7 were all punched in to the south of the final date, and it appears the 7 received a triple punch because another impression (first or second?) can also be seen to the north of the final digit. This is most bold on the 7's southward repunching. The other numerals' remnants can be seen more lightly and close to the final numerals.

REVERSE: Normal.

DIE DEFECTS:

Obv.: None seen.

Rev.: None seen.

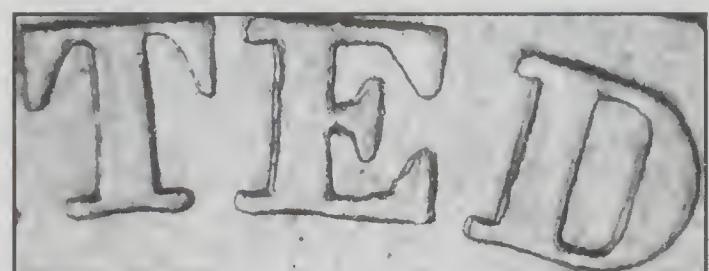
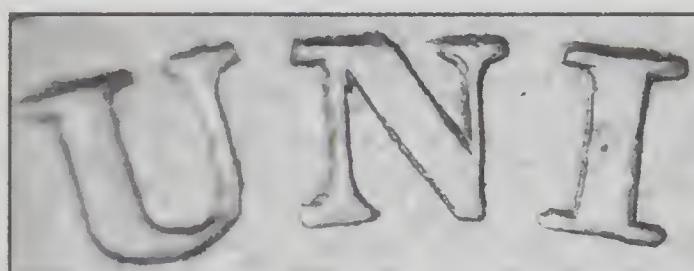
1887 Liberty Nickel DDR-001

What Class of Doubling Is It?

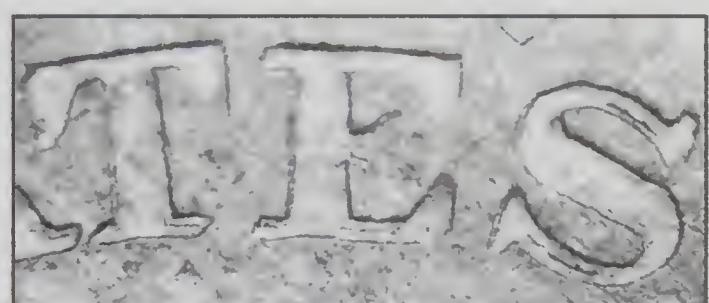
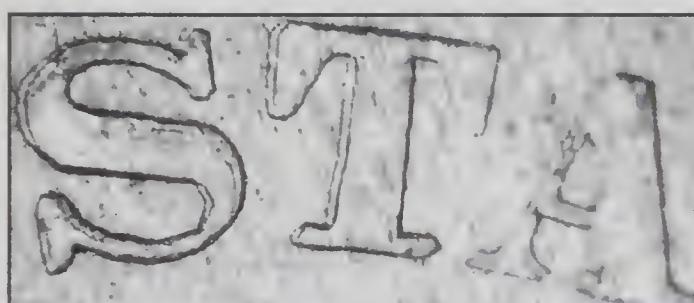
By Kevin Flynn

In Treasure Hunting Liberty Head Nickels, written with Bill Van Note, I attempted to list all doubled dies, misplaced dates, and repunched dates. One of the most unusual doubled dies featured is the 1887 doubled die reverse, DDR-001. What makes this particular doubled die so unusual is trying to understand what class of doubling this variety is. It is listed by CONECA as 1-R-III or a Design Hub Doubling. This implies that there were two different reverse hub designs used in 1887 on the Liberty Head nickels, while only one design has been identified for this year.

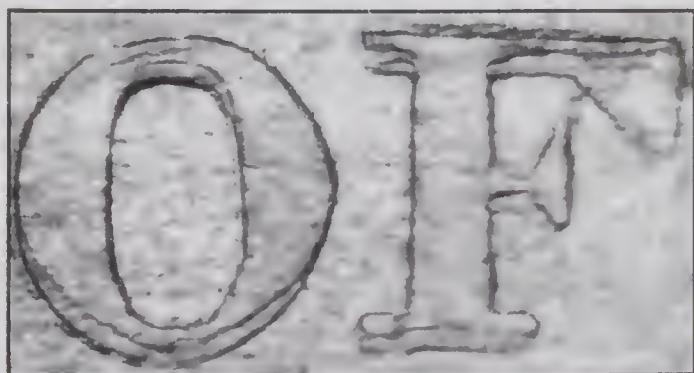
Following are photos illustrating the diagnostics of doubling.



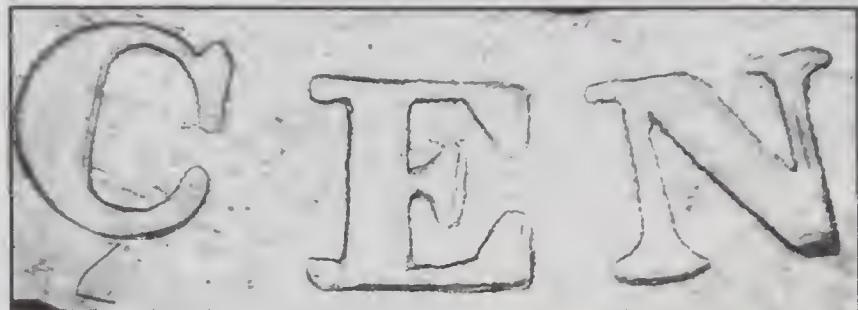
Minor doubling toward the center shows on UNITED.



Nice doubling shows on STATES. The first S appears to be a rotated doubling while the final S appears to be toward the center.

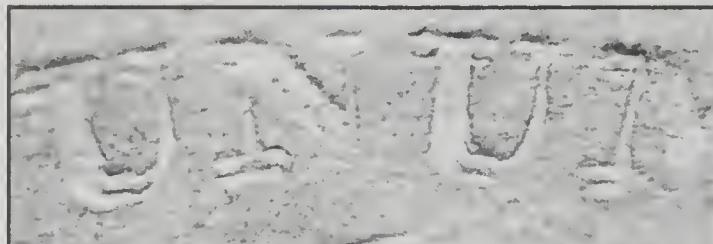
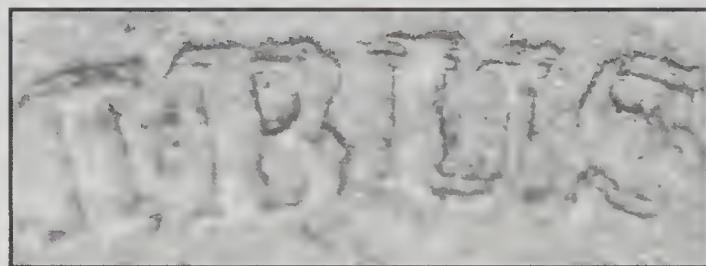
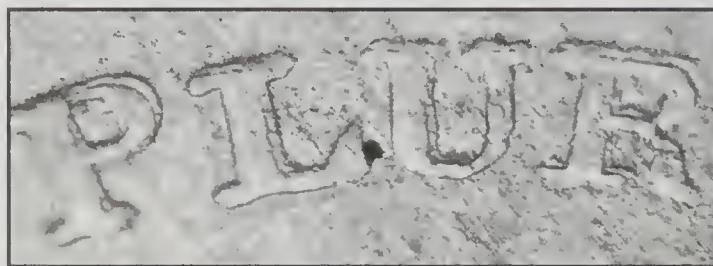


Strong doubling toward the rim shows on OF.



Clockwise doubling is evident on CENT.

What looks like Class IV doubling to the right shows on the V of FIVE.



The doubling on E PLURIBUS UNUM is the most fascinating. The doubling on PLUR appears to be rotated clockwise, but as you move toward S of PLURIBUS, Class II doubling shows toward the center. The P and S of PLURIBUS are equal distant from the center. The P of PLURIBUS is approximately below the ST of STATES which also shows a slightly rotated doubling. The final S of PLURIBUS is approximately under the final S of STATES, both of which show doubling toward the center. The doubling on IBUS is stronger than on ES of STATES. UNUM shows strong doubling toward the rim. This is consistent with the direction of doubling on OF.

PLURIBUS are equal distant from the center. The P of PLURIBUS is approximately below the ST of STATES which also shows a slightly rotated doubling. The final S of PLURIBUS is approximately under the final S of STATES, both of which show doubling toward the center. The doubling on IBUS is stronger than on ES of STATES. UNUM shows strong doubling toward the rim. This is consistent with the direction of doubling on OF.

Confused yet? You can easily rule out Class I, III, IV, VI and VIII. Class II can be ruled out as the doubling is rotational and in different directions. Also, there is not consistent doubling around the elements on the rim. It is my belief that the doubling on the top part of the coin is both Class V and VIII, Pivot and Tilt Hub Doubling. The pivot point would be about 4 o'clock. But how could the doubling show in both directions? I believe this effect might have been created if there was too little time between annealing and the die was still soft, but this is just a theory. I would like to hear other theories or ideas.



Tracking the Elusive 1892-O “Micro O” Half Dollar

By Michael Flanagan

Carefully tucked away in the text of David Lawrence Feigenbaum’s 1991 book on Barber Halves is a brief, intriguing statement regarding the known survivors of the 1892-O “Micro O” Barber Half Dollar: “perhaps only a dozen specimens exist in all grades.” As a relatively new collector of Barbers when I first read that statement about 10 years ago, that was my formal introduction to the Micro O.

If you are as of yet unacquainted with the fascinating Barber Half variety affectionately known as “the Micro O,” the explanation behind its curious moniker springs from the placement on its reverse of a very small New Orleans mintmark – about half the size of the normal letter “O,” believed by many to have been intended for the quarter as opposed to the half dollar. Its original mintage is, and will probably remain, completely unknown. It is believed that the tiny mintmark on the Micro O was quickly discovered at the Mint and “corrected,” since examples have always been difficult to obtain. These days, the Micro O is a decidedly rare coin, and as such, certainly deserving of more research than it has received in the past.

When I held my first specimen in 1996, a humble well-worn piece grading About Good, it was a thrill I’ll never forget. Despite its lower circulated grade, I treasured this nearly-slick time traveler from 1892 that still carried its tiny trademark “O.” It was the rarest coin I’d ever owned. Truth be told, the \$875 price tag hung on this AG Barber Half had presented a bit of a mental hurdle for me to jump before I could commit to the purchase, but in the end, the prospect of owning such a scarce coin provided the leap of faith. When I finally held it in my hand, I reflected on the fact that I now owned one of perhaps a dozen survivors. It was an incredible feeling any collector can relate to. I knew I’d made the right decision.

From there, it wasn’t long before my curiosity regarding the true population of Micro O survivors began to get the better of me. How many were there out there, really? With a bit of a personal stake riding on the answer, I set out to discover how the Micro O survivorship compared to other Barber elites such as the 1913 Liberty Nickel, the 1894-S dime, or the 1901-S quarter. From that point forward, whenever a Micro O came up for sale in dealers’ lists, trade papers, or at auction, I took note. When I began my census, most known specimens were only located at the extremes of the grading scale, as either AG to Good, or AU to MS. As

I learned of previously-unreported specimens, I gradually populated the scale a bit, but surprisingly few coins in the mid-circulated grades of Fine to Extremely Fine managed to surface. Nonetheless, there were some pleasant surprises from time to time. At the August 1997 ANA show in New York City for example, John and David Lawrence Feigenbaum acquired a previously-unknown specimen in a previously-unknown state of preservation: a Fine 12! Needless to say, in short order I traded my AG specimen and a trunk full of cash for the gorgeous Fine 12 with original toning. (I sold this specimen in 2000, and early last year acquired the only certified VF, a PCGS 25, with nice original toning.)

Many dealers in our wonderful hobby were of invaluable assistance to me in my efforts as a census-taker. Midwest dealer Brian Greer, who incidentally had sold me my first AG coin, had handled at least 10 specimens over the years and remembered them all fondly - like close acquaintances, almost. He was one of the first I encountered who firmly believed there had to be many more yet to be discovered. That sentiment was echoed by Californian Jack Beymer, who opined I'd find "about 40." And Larry Briggs from Ohio thought there were "perhaps 3 dozen or so," since by his own estimation he'd handled 15 or 20 different specimens himself over the years. In time, these estimates would prove stunningly accurate. Now my only challenge would be to track down these elusive pieces of silver.

In May of 2000, I penned an initial article for our Journal, "In Search of the Elusive Micro O," and appealed to the collecting community for further information. A summary later appeared in *Coin World* and, I believe, *Numismatic News*. Responses began to trickle in from around the country, some of them quite surprising. One Midwest collector still held an AU Micro O he purchased way back in 1950 to "fill the hole in his Capitol holder;" a gentleman from Ohio still owned his Micro O purchased at the 1981 Superior Sale, a "raw" MS which was hailed at the time as "the first MS piece we've seen." And on it went. One day, I received an incredible e-mail: a Michigan collector, cautious at first, revealed he currently held an amazing 5 pieces, all graded from AG to MS62! As we exchanged e-mails, this collector later revealed a slight concern that an ultimate revelation of the true Micro O numbers "might somehow diminish the value of his holdings." After all, his "family of five" (six, actually, at one time!) represented a substantial investment. How many more "families" would I discover squirreled away in collections and safe deposit boxes around the country, and once the numbers were published, how would that ultimately affect the value of the known Micro Os?

Not to worry. As of this writing, no hoards have surfaced, and the Michigan collector continues to hold the largest known group, with 5 specimens. New finds have slowed to near zero, and since my collector friends have been pressing me for some time to publish my findings, it's time to share. While a detailed census follows this article, here's a brief summary for those anxious for me to "cut to the

chase.” As of this writing, I have confirmed the existence of only 38 surviving Micro O specimens. That’s it. Brian Greer, Jack Beymer, Larry Briggs - you were right on the money.

The distribution of these survivors on the grading scale is as follows: Genuine/Fair: 3; AG: 4; Good: 9; Very Good: 2; Fine: 4; Very Fine: 2; Ex. Fine: 0; AU: 5; MS: 9. Total: 38. To date, none have surfaced in Canada or abroad; all reside in US collections.

What’s the king of all the Micro O survivors, the rarest of the rare, you ask? Not surprisingly, it comes to us from the collection of one of the former “kings” of American coin collecting, Mr. Eliasberg himself. Currently a PCGS MS68, the “Eliasberg Specimen” may never be topped. It was just acquired by a new owner this past February, and I’ve recently been in contact with the new owner via e-mail. For more details on this marvelous coin with an unparalleled pedigree, please see #38 in the census that follows.

And what of the Eliasberg’s “lesser brethren” in the various circulated grades? As you can see from the summary above, it remains a fact that precious few exist in the mid-grades. That much has not changed since Dave Lawrence first speculated on the number of survivors more than 10 years ago. There are still no known Micro Os in grades EF40 or 45. Only one of the two confirmed VF specimens is “nice,” with the other reported as being “polished,” although further information is sought on that piece. Of the four extant Fines, one has been harshly cleaned (according to its owner), leaving just three nice pieces in that grade. Only two Very Goods have been confirmed and both are nice pieces. Moving down the grading scale, the population is boosted a bit by nine Good specimens, but some have AG reverses and three have been marred by obverse scratches or rim damage. Seven more have been graded or otherwise documented below the grade of Good 4, but a few of these have problems as well. Condition aside, how do you spell “rare?” I spell it **M-I-C-R-O O**, in capital bold letters. As both a Barber collector and a fortunate owner of a Micro O, I have to smile. These are exciting coins in any grade. A nice specimen will fetch nearly \$1,000 in AG. The Eliasberg specimen may approach six figures, although its purchase terms are undisclosed. In some grades, a collector may be practically able to name his or her price, especially in the current hot market.

In summary, while I’ve thoroughly enjoyed this numismatic project, I will of course continue seeking new finds. Certainly, if any Barber Society member learns of new specimens, I’d deeply appreciate hearing from him or her. Collector privacy is always carefully preserved, and I will not publish or otherwise disclose even the owner’s state of residence or purchase price without permission. To me, the most important things are to continue building on the Micro O’s story, increase

our collective numismatic knowledge, and draw ever more attention to the wonderful Barber coins. I can always be reached at mpflanagan@aol.com. The 1892-O Micro O Half Dollar is not only one of the most exciting and valuable Barber coins of any denomination, it's a true piece of American numismatic history. The more we can learn about its history and bring to the pages of our Journal and other numismatic publications, the better. Its very existence adds a certain spice and excitement to Barber collecting in particular as well as to numismatics in general, and that, in my opinion, is a good part of what collecting is all about.

I would be remiss if I failed to acknowledge my indebtedness to David Lawrence Feigenbaum, who remains such an inspiration to me and Barber collectors everywhere. Dave, ever-willing to share his love and knowledge of Barbers and all things numismatic, played a considerable role in inspiring my undertaking this particular labor of numismatic love a few years back. I shared earlier versions of my "census" with Dave via e-mail before his passing, and despite the suffering he was enduring, he still took the time to respond and encourage my efforts, a testimony to the wonderful person he was, and through his books and memories, remains. Thanks, Dave.

The following is a detailed "census" of all Micro O specimens known to exist as of April 2003. Names of present owners have been deleted in most cases, at the request of the owners. Most purchase price information has been retained where known, unless again, a specific request was made by the present owner not to include it. Here's our list of survivors:

1. ANACS holdered "Genuine:" The so-called "Saltwater Coin" handled by Brian Greer, Larry Briggs & DLRC. Good detail, but badly corroded.
2. PCGS Fair 2: Purchased by collector "around 1995" at Long Beach for \$325.
3. Raw Fair: Described "AG+/fair clear o, problem free" presently offered by dealer Brian Greer for \$925.00. Believed to be previously unattributed.
4. PCGS AG3: Found unattributed in Barber Half set purchased by Michigan collector in July 2000. Subsequently holdered by PCGS as AG3 in October 2000.
5. AG3: Purchased by BCCS member Phil Carrigan from Dave Lawrence in 1993.
6. PCGS AG 3: Purchased raw by author in 1996 from Brian Greer for \$875. In early 1998, traded to DLRC who had it graded by PCGS as AG3. Offered in a July 13, 1998 *Coin World* ad for \$975 and sold to unknown customer.
7. Raw AG: reported by Barber Society member Russ Easterbrooks in Winter 2000 BCCS Journal as being held by an "older gentleman at a Vermont coin show."

8. Raw Good: described in Brian Greer's 11/01 pricelist as "usual weak reverse rim, numerous rim marks, damage but RARE". Sold for \$695 to collector who placed it up for sale in Jan. 2002 on eBay. Bought by an unnamed woman collector from Colorado for \$750. Specimen believed to be previously unaccounted for.

9. Raw G/AG+: With obverse scratches. Sold by Midwest dealer in 2002 for \$1595.00.

10. Raw G/AG+++: Sold by Steven Musil in early 2000 to unknown customer for \$1800. Full-rimmed G obverse, nearly full-rimmed reverse. Original gray, no detracting marks or distinguishing features. We agreed would probably slab G4.

11. Raw G: Currently owned by a Massachusetts collector, also a Barber Society member who "cherried" the coin at a small New England show in January 1996 for \$20. Original gray. His close description follows: "obverse is G6, reverse retains over half the lettering, in legends; half of E PLURIBUS UNUM shows; 1/3 of vertical lines visible on right side of shield; "HALF" is full, "OF AMERICA" gone. No other distinguishing marks."

12. PCGS G4: Currently owned by Connecticut collector who purchased the piece from Brian Greer. Asking price was \$1950, but "a lower price was negotiated."

13. PCGS G4: As reported by the owner of #12, a second PCGS G4 was offered through the BCCS Journal. Brian Greer told me the coin was purchased by an Indiana collector he was not at liberty to name.

14. PCGS G4: (Net graded due to old pin scratch.) Purchased by Michigan collector for \$2950 from Larry Briggs. Offered by Mr. Briggs in a December 21, 1998 ad as follows: "Would be choice VG, has pin scratch eye/neck \$3250." Owner states: "Almost certainly the one identified by Dave Lawrence in his book (as one of the 'original 12')."

15. NGC G4: Attractive original purchased as a raw, unattributed coin in April of 1997 by Nebraska collector for \$90; later holdered by NGC. Obverse has VG detail in wreath. "TY" shows. Reverse AG detail. Light "x" on shield.

16. Cull G/VG: With scratches. Handled by Brian Greer a few years ago; sold to West Coast collector.

17. Raw VG: Currently owned by West Coast dealer in his private collection. Described as "original gray, full letters 'L' & 'Y,' only half of letters 'I' & 'T,' some handling marks on obverse. Reverse has full rim, with all letters clear of rim. Rim low to flat at 11 to 2 o'clock."

18. PCGS VG8: Currently owned by Michigan collector who purchased it from Brian Greer for \$3450. From Brian's March through May 2000 pricelists. Original Gray; 4 full letters in LIBERTY; reverse rim complete except at 2 o'clock where

it's wearing down into the tops of the letters.

19. Raw F12: Harshly-cleaned piece with uniform porosity, owned by New York collector. Color reported to be "silvery gray," and darker in some areas. Slightly grainy look, more porous on reverse. Reverse rim full on reverse, though denticles are weak from 12 to 3 o'clock, as is common. Authenticated in June of 1996 by Dave Lawrence personally.
20. PCGS F12: Originally purchased raw by John Feigenbaum of DLRC for \$3080 at New York ANA in August of 1997. Holdered by PCGS as F12 and sold by DLRC to the author in September of 1997 for \$3650. Subsequently resold to California collector in October of 2000 for \$4250. Original grey color; extremely nice piece for the grade, with no problems.
21. NGC F12: Sold on June 25, 1998 by Dave Lawrence to an East Coast collector for \$3,800.
22. "Fine or Better" (raw): Reported by Steve Sczerbiak in Barber Journal as part of a member's collection. Seen at summer ANA show in Chicago. May be same coin offered to Brian Greer for \$6,000 in summer of 2000, which Brian reported as "nice appearing VF, with a few scratches, didn't appear cleaned."
23. "Polished VF:" Reported to a Michigan collector at a Livonia, Michigan show in 1999. No further details known at this time.
24. PCGS VF25: Offered in Brian Greer's February 2002 pricelist as a raw, very nice F18, for \$4,750. Purchased by Brian in September 2001 from a fellow dealer at the Cincinnati show. Held by Brian for a few months until strength of coin market could be determined in the wake of "9/11." Very nice and completely original Fine, which bordered on VF. Purchased by the author who subsequently had it holdered by PCGS in May of 2002. Came back as VF25, making it the only holdered specimen in the VF range.
25. Cleaned AU: verified by ANACS at a show in 2000 as "genuine, would holder as AU." Owned by a Midwest collector who purchased it way back in 1950 to "fill the hole in his Capitol holder." Offered about \$4300 from Dave Lawrence staff member earlier in 2000, but declined.
26. PCGS AU 50: Currently owned by an East Coast collector who purchased it April 27, 1999 for \$10,500. Previously, it was purchased October 14, 1997 by a Michigan collector from Delaware Valley Rare Coins from *Coin World* ad (listed at \$3900), but traded to DLRC in April of 1999 in order to acquire the Norweb MS66 1904-S Barber Half. Described by the former owner as "beautiful & original."
27. PCGS AU50: A second specimen, sold by Brian Greer in 1999 to a Milwaukee area collector.

28. NGC AU53: Currently owned by West Coast collector. No further details available at the present time.

29. ANACS AU55: Currently owned by a Michigan collector who paid \$11,500 to DLRC. From the Pryor Auction of Bowers & Merena ('96 or '97). Brought about \$4300 at auction, brokered through Dave Lawrence. Owner reports the piece as "well-described in the catalog" and "considered by B&M to be AU58."

30. Raw MS60: Still owned by an Ohio collector who purchased it for \$4.000 at the Superior Sale, July 22, 1981, "Auction 81." It was Lot 755. Described in the catalog as "Mint State 60. Well-struck and fully lustrous with slight proof-like surfaces. Some scattered contact and bag marks appear in the fields and on the face. This mintmark was made in error from a punch used for the quarter dollar. Extremely rare and, according to Scott's Encyclopedia, less than 10 are known in all grades. This is the first high grade example we have seen. Possibly a candidate for "finest known." Estimated realization was \$8,000 - \$10,000." Undoubtedly would grade higher than a "60" today.

31. Raw MS61: Handled by Bowers & Merena in the Fall of 2000. Came in as ANACS 61 because it had been lightly cleaned. Bowers broke it out for the sale. It brought \$10,062.50 (\$8750 hammer, plus 15%). This is possibly the original "MS61" piece in Dave Lawrence's 1992 survey. Current whereabouts unknown.

32. PCGS 61: Crossed over from ANACS 62 PL ("Prooflike") in May 2002. Purchased in 1996 or 1997 for \$18,500 by a Michigan collector from Larry Briggs. Owner describes the coin as having "proof-like surfaces, pleasantly toned with nice color at the periphery."

33. Raw MS: The "Dr. Thaine Price Specimen." Sold by David Akers May 19, 1998. The piece brought \$55,000 and currently resides with a collector in the Eastern US.

34. The Stack-Atwater Specimen: Referred to in the Thaine Price auction catalog. According to Dave Akers, this was from the James A. Stack Collection which was auctioned off around 1975. The piece has not surfaced since, but is considered to be a very choice piece, perhaps second only to the former Eliasberg piece.

35. NGC MS65: Brokered by a West Coast dealer about 10 years ago. The piece, originally raw, came into a small show the dealer was attending; he bought it and subsequently had it holdered with NGC. It was sold at a Superior Sale 10 years ago for \$16,500.

36. "Dave Lawrence piece." Recently crossed over from NGC 64 holder to PCGS 64. Key coin characteristic: does not have the characteristic die crack at the bottom of the obverse. John Feigenbaum told me 11/20/00 that the piece "looks better than a 64, with beautiful very light toning, but may not have had enough luster for

the grading service.” Was offered at \$45,000, but actual sale price is not known by the author. Presently resides in the PCGS #1 Registry Set of Dr. Steve Duckor.

37. “GEM BU:” From the “Queller Collection.” Offered by Stacks October 15-6, 2002 auction, it realized \$80,500 including buyer’s premium. Believed by a prominent collector to now be in a PCGS 67 holder, as that appeared in the PCGS reports in November 2002 shortly after the Stacks’ sale.

38. PCGS MS68: Eliasberg Specimen. The granddaddy of them all. Personally examined (with great pleasure, I might add) by the author in August 1997 at the New York ANA, at an impromptu viewing arranged by Dave Lawrence. Extremely light original toning, with hints of light gold. Superb surfaces, as one would assume from the assigned grade. Dave Lawrence opined at the time that this was the nicest of all Eliasberg’s Barber Halves. Handled by Bowers & Merena at the Eliasberg Sale in New York City, April 6th through 8th of 1997. Of this marvelous coin, the catalog noted: “Overall, it is a superb strike, but with very slight traces of lightness at upper right of shield.” It was graded raw by Bowers & Merena as MS67. Hammered down for \$54,000, the Eliasberg piece was first certified by NGC as MS68 following the sale. No other Micro O can ever share this particular coin’s pedigree. It is not presently known when this piece was crossed over to its present PCGS 68 “green-tab” holder. It had been reported to the author that this wonder coin had been recently owned “by an Eastern collector, who wished to remain anonymous,” but that assertion is being investigated following a change of ownership in February 2003, and the emergence of a new, and rightfully proud, owner. Yes, just two months ago, the storied Eliasberg Micro O added yet a new owner to its growing pedigree and journeyed out West to join an otherwise-complete Mint State Barber Half collection considered to be, on balance, the third finest known. The terms of the sale were not disclosed. In any event, it’s arguable that the acquisition of the “Eliasberg 68” has elevated the status of that collection a notch. The balance of the collection aside, however, this finest known of all surviving Micro O specimens certainly stands as the rarest of the rare, and to-date, the most highly desired of all. The present owner, who graciously agreed to contact the author through a mutual Barber-collecting friend just days before “press-time” for this Spring edition of the Journal, added these welcome die notes regarding his new acquisition: “microscopic die crack on obverse begins below star 1 and continues right through the bases of the date numerals.” He concluded his note to the author with a simple statement that hinted at the degree to which he obviously treasures his new Barber gem: “I would expect and hope there will not be a different owner of this rarity for long, long time.”



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